

CLAIMS

1. In a networked computing environment including a Raster Image Process (RIP) manager coupled to at least one RIP engine, a method for the RIP manager to automatically configure the RIP engine, the method comprising:

receiving a print job; and

requesting the RIP engine to perform dynamic configuration of at least one RIPing parameter when the RIPing parameter is not congruent to a RIP manager supplied processing preference, the dynamic configuration being requested in consideration of the RIP engine RIPing a particular portion of the print job.

2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the at least one RIPing parameter is a RIPing algorithm, a resource/software version, a particular font, or a color profile.

3. A method as recited in claim 1:

wherein the RIP engine is a first RIP engine of first and second RIP engines in a pipeline

wherein the first and second RIP engines are heterogeneous with respect to one another; and

wherein requesting the RIP engine to perform dynamic configuration is further directed to configuring the first RIP engine to process the particular portion using same RIPing parameters as used by the second RIP engine to RIP a different portion of the print job.

4. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the method further comprises downloading, by the RIP engine, any configuration resource(s) indicated by RIP manager supplied processing preference(s) that are not locally available to the RIP engine.

5. A method as recited in claim 4, wherein RIP engine downloads configuration resource(s) from a network address identified by the RIP manager.

6. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the method further comprises:
directing the RIP engine to communicate a status to the RIP manager indicating whether the RIP engine can perform the dynamic configuration in accordance with the RIP manager supplied processing preference; and
wherein the status determines whether the RIP engine or a different RIP engine in the pipeline will RIP the particular portion.

7. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein the status is a response message or a lapse of time.

8. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the method further comprises:
responsive to determining that the RIP engine cannot successfully RIP the print job in accordance with the RIP manager supplied processing preference;
identifying a different RIP engine that can or has performed such dynamic configuration of the at least one RIPing parameter; and
communicating the particular portion to the different RIP engine for RIPing in accordance to the RIP manager supplied processing preference.

9. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the method further comprises:
- determining that the RIP engine can successfully RIP the print job in accordance with the RIP manager supplied processing preference; and
 - responsive to the determining, communicating the particular portion to the RIP engine for RIPing in accordance to the RIP manager supplied processing preference.
10. A computer-readable medium having computer-program instructions executable by a processor for automatically configuring a raster image processor (RIP) engine stored thereon, the computer-program instructions comprising instructions for:
- evaluating a print job to identify a set of RIPing parameters;
 - communicating the RIPing parameters to a RIP engine to direct the RIP engine to automatically configure its RIPing operations to conform to the RIPing parameters.
11. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 10, wherein the RIPing parameters indicate one or more specific RIPing algorithms, font resources, color profiles, and/or software versions.
12. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 10, wherein the computer-program instructions further comprise instruction for supplementing or replacing the RIPing parameters with one or more default RIPing parameters.

13. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 10, wherein the computer-program instructions further comprise instruction for:

receiving a download request from the RIP engine, the download request identifying at least a subset of the RIPing parameters; and

responsive to the download request, communicating resources corresponding to the at least a subset of the RIPing parameters to the RIP engine for subsequent installation by the RIP engine to configure its RIPing operations.

14. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 10, wherein the computer-program instructions further comprise instruction for directing the RIP engine to RIP at least a portion of a print job using resource(s) associated with the RIPing parameters.

15. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 10, wherein the RIP engine is a first RIP engine of first and second RIP engines in a pipeline, and wherein the computer-program instructions further comprise instructions for:

determining that the first RIP engine cannot successfully RIP a print job in accordance with the RIPing parameters;

responsive to the determining, automatically configuring the second RIP engine to perform RIPing operations in accordance to the RIPing parameters; and

communicating a particular portion of a print job to the second RIP engine for RIPing, the particular portion having previously been assigned to the first RIP engine.

16. A raster image processor (RIP) manager computing device comprising the processor coupled to the computer-program instructions recited in claim 10.

17. A computer-readable media comprising computer-program instructions executable by a processor for automatically configuring a raster image processor (RIP) engine coupled to a RIP manager, the computer-program instructions comprising instructions for:

receiving, by the RIP engine, a request to configure RIPing operations in accordance with one or more parameters specified by the RIP manager; and

responsive to receiving the request, the RIP engine configuring RIPing operations based on the one or more parameters.

18. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 17, wherein the one or more parameters are associated with one or more of a particular RIPing algorithm, font resource, and/or software version.

19. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 17, wherein the computer-program instructions further comprise instructions for downloading one or more resources corresponding to the one or more parameters from an identified network address.

20. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 17, wherein the identified network address is provided to the RIP engine by the RIP manager and/or stored in the computer-readable medium, which is local to the RIP engine.

21. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 17, wherein the computer-program instructions further comprise instructions for:

determining that computer resources of the RIP engine are insufficient to download and/or install one or more resources corresponding to the one or more parameters from an identified network address; and

responsive to the determining, re-assigning and communicating a portion of a print job assigned to the RIP engine to a different RIP engine coupled to the RIP manager.

22. A computing device comprising the processor coupled to the computer-readable medium as recited in claim 17.